DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 323 777 FL 018 834

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TITLE How To Speak Standard American English without a Foreign Accent. Chinese Edition.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-937399-21-3
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 50p.
AVAILABLE FROM Jade Publications, Box 5567, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413 ($49.95 including cassettes; $29.95 for teachers).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Chinese; Consonants; *English (Second Language); Error Patterns; *Immigrants; Interference (Language); *North American English; Phonology; *Pronunciation; *Pronunciation Instruction; Second Language Learning; Tape Recordings; Uncommonly Taught Languages; Vowels

ABSTRACT

This transcript of and guide to a two-cassette course designed to assist Chinese immigrants in erasure of their foreign accents can be used for either individual or group study. Narrative and taped demonstrations of American English that pinpoint typical phonological barriers and pronunciation difficulties are outlined. The author's own system of pronunciation symbols is used. (MSE)

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How to Speak Standard American English Without a Foreign Accent- Chinese Edition

Jack Catran

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JACK CATRAN

HOW TO SPEAK STANDARD AMERICAN ENGLISH WITHOUT A FOREIGN ACCENT

A HENRY HIGGINS PRODUCTION

This is not another book on "English for the Foreign Born" or "English as a Second Language"

IT IS

● **AN INTENSIVE COURSE IN ACCENT ERASURE** ●

A powerful and effective audio-visual tool designed to be used by those millions of new Americans seeking to rid their speech of **FOREIGN ACCENTS**

CHINESE EDITION

JACK CATRAN

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CHINESE EDITION

4

Pygmalion Books — *an imprint of*
JADE PUBLICATIONS
Box 5567, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Emma Lazarus
The Statue of Liberty

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Library of Congress Registration Number SRu 82 744
ISBN: 0-937399-21-3

First printing December 1989
Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE EDITION

There is a wave of immigration sweeping into the United States today, promising to equal, if not surpass, the influx that took place between the turn of the century and World War I. Millions of people, seeking a new way of life, now call the United States their home. And there is no sign that the wave will abate, as conditions appear to worsen the world over.

Yet, during my extensive experience as a specialist in dialect and accent erasure, I have sought vainly for a book or teaching aid specifically designed to help my Chinese students eliminate or reduce their foreign accents. To be sure, there is a vast library of source material covering such subjects as English for the foreign born, English as a second language, and numerous dictionaries of American idioms, but none, to my knowledge, have attacked, or even approached, the problem of dialect erasure.

This book is a pioneer attempt to alleviate that problem. It is written in simple English, and cast in the second person singular. Because it is aimed not only at teachers, but also directly at you, the new American, the text carefully steers clear of the phonetic symbols and "scientific" jargon of the field of linguistics.

Since no two ex-natives of different Chinese provinces speak English in the same way, the

approach remains of necessity general. The general approach is necessary also because the languages within China vary. For example: Cantonese, Kwangtung, Foochow, Amoy, Swatow, and Ninpo — though they all derived from one common stock — differ from each other considerably, as does Mandarin, now the official language of Taiwan, the People's Republic of China, and other Chinese-speaking countries.

The pronunciation symbols used in the course are my own, and anyone can understand them after a short period of orientation. One problem remains: a sprinkling of American-English sounds do not exist in a number of foreign languages. For example, the **AY** sound in the words "jade", "break", and "case" is unknown to the Chinese tongue. For this reason, it becomes necessary for you with Chinese accents to *hear* and learn to mimic the **AY** sound; the inflection, color, and sounds of American-English must be *heard* by those with foreign accents before they can learn to repeat and eventually adopt those characteristics in their everyday speech. The cassettes that accompany the book effectively solve that problem.

The cassettes can be used in workshops, speech clinics, and of course, by you new Americans in the privacy of your own homes. To get the most out of the material, two cassette recorders should be used, one for playing the course cassettes, the other to be used by you to compare your own speech patterns with the demonstration material.

For maximum progress, there can be no substitute for total immersion by you students in

American-English. In addition to listening to the cassettes, while driving an automobile your radio should be on as much as possible, preferably tuned to programs that feature talk. The same practice should be engaged in at home when viewing television; while, admittedly, you may have to suffer through much idle chatter and inferior program content, we must keep in mind that to obtain our goal with optimum speed, the medium (speech, in this case) should always be considered more important than the message.

There are subtleties in American-English too difficult to communicate in a book. Few Americans, for example, pronounce the word "the" correctly as **THEE**. "To" is rarely pronounced correctly as **TOO**. Rather, for "he went to see the man", Americans tend to say **HEE WENT TUH SEE THUH MAN**. Because you new Americans conscientiously tend to concentrate your efforts on pronouncing each word in a sentence correctly, it is difficult for you, at the beginning, to adopt the American habit of stringing words together without unnaturally stressing such words as "the" and "to". Where appropriate, and if there is no risk of confusing you, the text and cassettes will clearly present both the stressed and unstressed forms of this class of word.

What is American-English? The United States used to be a country made up of many regional dialects: Boston, New York, Midwest, etc. With the advent of radio, television, and high-speed air travel, these localisms are rapidly disappearing. The American-English used as a

standard in this course hews as closely as possible to the English spoken by network radio and television announcers. The language is dynamic and flexible, and changes daily. I am confident that the yardstick used in the course will serve you as an effective working model in your quest for mastery of the language.

One final note: the ultimate purpose of the course is to attempt to offer a humble contribution to the noble process of integration that so typifies the cultural history of the United States. The people of the United states are the product of the richest admixture of cultures the civilized world has ever known. If I can help you, new American, to meld into, and further enrich, our heritage, then we are all on our way toward attaining the growth and maturity so desperately required by the world, especially this world of today which is so in need of world citizens.

END OF INTRODUCTION

How to Speak English Without a Foreign Accent

It would have been easy to thicken this book, and lengthen the accompanying cassette, by padding it with high-sounding phrases stressing the importance to your career and social life of learning to use your vocal instrument to speak American-English authoritatively, pleasantly, and correctly. I could have gone on about the need to motivate yourself to spend hours and hours practicing voice production and accent-free speech. In addition, I could have wasted your valuable time discussing the elements of speech production; respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation; how the airstream is delivered from your lungs through the trachea to your larynx; how the process of articulation works; how language and verbal behavior evolved; etcetera.

But I deliberately avoided that approach. Instead, I shall immediately proceed to teach you how to self-monitor and self-correct your Chinese accent by working with the printed material and the taped demonstrations. I have little doubt that if you set aside the time required for frequent practice periods you will gradually acquire a mastery of the phonetic repertoire of American-English sounds — the vowels, consonants, and diphthongs — along with the inflection and color of the language, in your reading, and, more important, in your everyday, spontaneous speech.

Aside from urging you to use two tape recorders — one for listening to the demo tapes, the other for recording your own speech — I can think of no other procedures for you to follow as you progress through the course, reading the lessons to follow and listening to the demo tape.

The Pronunciation Symbols Used in This Course

For our purpose, the English alphabet of 26 letters shall represent roughly 50 classes of sound. The six vowels, **a - e - i - o - u - y,** alone, or in combination, represent 20 vowel and diphthong sounds. The twenty consonants, alone, or in combination, represent 30 sounds.

Note: The symbols listed in the column titled **Our Symbol** shall serve as the alphabet of this course. *You must memorize* the sound of each one before moving on to the lessons ahead. The left hand column lists the symbols used in Webster's 2nd International Dictionary.

VOWELS

Dict Symbol	Our Symbol	Sample Word
ŭ	UH	under, alone
ä	AH	father, hard
ă	A	bad, master
ô	AW	ball, cough
ē	EE	he, feed
ĕ	EH	get, letter
â	a	care, chair
ĭ	i	sit, middle
ŏ	O	pot, proper
o͞o	OO	food, moon
o͝o	oo	look, good
ů	yOO	unit, eulogize
ā	AY (EH-EE)	take, later
ī	I (AH-EE)	ice, might
ō	OH (UH-OO)	bone, phone
û	u (UH-EE)	earth, turban
ou	OW (AH-OO)	out, mouse
oi	Oi (AW-EE)	oil, coin
ă	Aee (A-EE)	thank, dangle

The SCHWA (pronounced **SHV-AH**), symbolized as Σ, represents the unstressed sound found in the 2nd syllable of "China", "pencil". Also found in the unstressed "er" of "teacher" and "paper".

CONSONANTS

Our Symbol		Sample Word
KW		quick, quite
NG		sing, rang
KSH		luxury
Y		yes, your
KH		loch, ach
R		rice, run
W		wing, woman
WH		while, when
M		mother, mine
N		never, nonsense
L		letter, lovely
H		hungry, honey
J	(voiced)	judge, gelatin
CH	(unvoiced)	church, cheese
G	(v)	get, go
K	(unv)	cut, cat
GZ	(v)	exit, exert
KS	(unv)	tax, exite
ZH	(v)	azure
SH	(unv)	she, shun
V	(v)	vowel, vote
F	(unv)	frank, fort
TH	(v)	the, those
th	(unv)	thin, through
D	(v)	dim, done
T	(unv)	tin, ton
B	(v)	butter, bending
P	(unv)	putter, pending
Z	(v)	zeal, zone
S	(unv)	seal, sewn

Before I identify each of your trouble spots and show you how to correct them, I shall first point out a few of the common errors that may now be part of your everyday speech.

There are only four musical notes in most Chinese languages. For this reason, it is easy to fall into the habit of speaking American-English — a language featuring a wider tonal range — with the same undulating monotone.

Another problem arises out of the fact that in Chinese each sound is only one syllable in length. As a result, when speaking English, you tend to separate words of more than one syllable into their component syllables with the aspirate **UH**, as in **WIS-UH-K-EE** (whiskey).

You also tend to separate two consonants coming together in a word by an **UH**, as in **S-UH-T-oo-PiT** (stupid). When two consonant sounds come together between two words, as in "ice cream", you generally insert the aspirate **UH**, as in **AH-iS-UH K-UH-LiM**. These problems will be analyzed in greater detail later.

While your primary goal in the course is the eradication of your Chinese accent, you may also encounter occasional problems with the proper use of English grammar. Though the concern of the course is your accent, it would not be amiss at this point to remind you of a common syntax and grammatic error committed by you Americans from Asian countries:

Chinese words do not indicate tense, quantity, or gender, which results in a shortening of English sentences, as in **GiB UH WiS-UH-K-**

EE D-EH M-EH-N (Give whiskey that man), for "Give the whiskey to that man".

The following listing of both vowels and consonants represents the outstanding problems in your pronunciation of English. The right-hand column displays the very heart of your pronunciation problems; the left-hand column the keys to the solution. You will be well on your way toward the mastery of American-English as soon as you develop the habit of using the left-hand examples in your spontaneous, everyday speech.

First you will have to listen to my taped demonstration of the American sound, then practice it yourself on your own recorder until you feel that you have come close to the correct pronunciation. At the risk of appearing as though I am oversimplifying, I must remind you that all of your vowel and consonant pronunciation problems are pointed out in the innocent-looking list to follow and the short, but intensive, tape that accompanies it. As soon as you conquer these problems, you shall be well on your way to success. Bon Voyage!

VOWEL CHANGES

American Sound		Chinese Sound	
Sound	**Example**	**Sound**	**Example**
AY	take	EH	T-EH-K
	break		BL-EH-K
	day		D-EH
AH	father	O	FOD-AH
	harbor		HOB-AH
	sharp		SOP

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A	bad	EH	B-EH-T
	chatter		TS-EH-T-AH
	guarantee		G-EH-L-AH-N-UH-TI
AW	caller	AH	K-AH-L-AH
	falter		F-AH-OO-T-AH
	water		W-AH-T-AH
EE	he	I	HI
	treat		T-UH-LIT
	people		PIP-OO
EH	bed	A	BAT
	met		MAT
	red		RAD
a	chair	No Change	
	bare		
	care		
I	bit	No Change	
	sit		
	differ		
O	top	No Change	
	copper		
	follow		
OO	spoon	oo	S-UH-P-oo-N
	food		F-oo-T
	stupid		S-UH-T-oo-PIT
oo	foot	No Change	
	wolf		
	soot		
yOO	pure	No Change	
	beauty		
	cube		
UH	alone	AH	AH-L-AW-N
	final		F-AH-IN-AH-L
	sofa		S-AW-F-AH
I	price	AH-I	P-UH-L-AH-IS
	cry		K-UH-L-AH-I
	guile		G-AH-I-OO
OH	stone	AW	S-UH-T-AW-N
	motor		M-AW-T-AH
	both		B-AW-T

u	earn	a	UH-N
	purple		P-UH-P-OO
	furnish		F-UH-Ni-SH
OW	scout	AH	S-UH-K-AH-T
	mountain		M-AH-N-UH-TiN
	doubtful		D-AH-F-OO
OI	oil	AH-I	AH-yOO
	enjoy		AH-N-UH-J-AH
	loiter		L-AH-EE-T-AH
Aee	bank	EH-I	B-EH-NiK
	thank		T-EH-NiK
	ankle		EH-iN-AH-K-OO

CONSONANT CHANGES

Before we discuss the Chinese changes to the consonants of American-English, we must first identify the aspirate **UH**, the puff of air usually added by Chinese to most consonants except N. For example, the phrase "At the same time" comes out sounding like **AH-T-UH S-EH-M-UH T-AH-iM**, "Please don't touch me", sounds like **P-UH-RiS-UH N-AH-T-UH T-AH-CH-AH mi**, "Cat" becomes **K-AH-T-UH**, "Cream" becomes **K-UH-RiM-UH**. Once you learn to connect consonants without the intervening breath of air, you will have taken an important step forward in your pursuit of flawless American-English. Say **KR-EE-M**, not **K-UH-RiM-UH**; say **KAT**, not **K-AH-T-UH**.

Now for the troublesome consonants:

B— While your lips, tongue, and teeth assume the proper position to sound **B**, you sometimes do not voice it, as in the words "stab him", which you pronounce **S-UH-TA(B) HiM.**

D— The sound of initial and medial **D** is usually changed to the sound of **T** in your speech, if sounded at all, as in **T-AW-T-AH**, for "daughter", or **BL-EH-T-AH**, for "bladder". You often drop the sound completely, or utter it without voice. You also tend to drop it when it is preceded by another consonant, as in "sound", which you pronounce **S-AH-N**. When final after a vowel, you may sound it without voice, as in **B-UH-R-AD(D)** for "broad", or substitute a **T** sound for it, as in **B-UH-R-AH-T.**

F— This sound is usually deleted when it appears medially, as in **G-AW-AH-T-AH Mi**, for "go after me".

G— While you do well with this sound in its initial position, you often change it to a **K** sound medially, as in **AH-K-AW**, for "ago". When **G** follows **N** in words ending in "ng", you drop it completely, as in **SiN**, for "thing", of **T-AH-N** for "tongue".

K— A difficult sound for many Chinese, especially when it comes before **S**, as in the **KS** sound of **X**. Example: in the word **EH-S-AH-S-AH-S**, for "exercise", it is dropped completely.

L— Here's a tough one for speakers of Chinese languages, and a sound on which we shall spend extra time later in the course. There are many examples of when it is dropped after certain consonants, as in **S-UH-P-UH-R-A-SH**, for "splash". Many times you use it where you shouldn't, as when you replace the **N** in **PR-AW-L-AH-NS**, for "pronounce". The final **L** in "oil" is

difficult; the word is usually pronounced **Oi-oo**. But medially, between two vowels, the problem eases, as in **Oi-LiT**, for "oil it", or **T-Oi-LiT**, for t"toilet". Also, you tend to say **PiP-OO** for "people", and **MiY-AH-NS** for "millions".

N— You often replace this sound with the sound of **L**, as discussed above. Another example is to be found in your pronunciation of **PL-EH-Ti-L-AH-M**, for "platinum".

Q— See discussion on consonant **K**. For the same reason, you have a tendency to avoid the sound of **Q** — properly pronounced **KW** — because of your difficulty with the sound of **K**.

R— Despite the notion that the Chinese love to substitute **L** for **R**, many of you — especially the Northern Manchus — pronounce the **R** gutturally, as the Germans do. Some of you, however, substitute a sound resembling **L**, as in **F-UH-L-AW-S**, for "frost", but it is not a pure **L**. The final "er" ("teacher", "paper", etc.) is usually mispronounced **AH**, as in **Ti-CH-AH**, **P-EH-P-AH**.

T— When final, this sound is usually unaspirated, though the lips and tongue are in the correct position for **T**, as in **F-AH-S(T)**, for "fast".

X— Properly sounded as **KS**, as in "exercise", or **GZ**, as in "exert", the **K** and **G** sounds are almost always troublesome for you. You therefore tend to say **EH-S-EH-MP-**

OO for "example", and **EH-S-EH-MiN** for "examine".

Z— The sound of **S** is usually substituted for **Z**, as in **SiBR-AH**, for "zebra".

SH CH—The sound of **S**, as described in consonant **Z** above, is usually substituted for these sounds. Sometimes **TS** is substituted for **CH**, as in **TS-AHi-N-AH**, for "China".

TH— Usually replaced by **S**, but sometimes **L**, as in **L-OH-S**, for "those", or **S-AH-S-EH-NS** for "thousands".

th ZH—Usually replaced by **S**, as in **S-UH-L-EE** for "three" and **EH-S-yOO**, for "azure".

VOWEL PRACTICE

Turn on your tape recorder and repeat each of the following after me in the silent spaces I have provided after each word. Record both my version and yours and compare the two. Keep practicing until you are satisfied with your pronunciation. If you have problems, do not despair. There are more exercises later in the course that should iron out your present difficulties.

insane — **iNS-AY-N**
Spain — **SP-AY-N**
jade — **J-AY-D**
airplane — **aRPL-AY-N**
umbrella — **UH-MBR-EH-LƩ**
understand — **UH-N-D-ƩR-STAND**
exactly — **EH-GZ-AKTL-EE**
character — **KARƩKTƩR**
partial — **P-AH-R-SH-ƩL**

larder — **L-AH-RDƩR**
fortune — **F-AW-R-CH-ƩN**
mortify — **M-AW-RTƩFI**
redeem — **R-EE-D-EE-M**
water wheel — **WAW-TƩR WH-EE-L**
Ireland — **IRLƩND**
timely — **TIML-EE**
rodeo — **R-OH-D-EE-OH** or
R-OH-D-AY-OH
polarize — **P-OH-LƩR-IZ**
folk poem — **F-OH-K P-OH-EH-M**
Baltimore — **B-AW-L-TƩM-AW-R**
falsify — **F-AW-LSiFI**
boondoggle — **B-OO-NDOGL**
ruin — **R-OO-iN**
Moorish — **M-OO-Ri-SH**
beauty — **B-yOO-T-EE**
municipal — **M-yOO-Nj-Si-PƩL**
ubiquitous — **yOO-Bi-KWiTƩS**
frown — **FR-OW-N**
roundabout — **R-OW-NDƩB-OW-T**
prowess — **PR-OW-EHS**

CONSONANT PRACTICE

sleek — **SL-EE-K** (Though there is no vowel between the **S** and **L**, if we insert a quickly-sounded **i**, the word sometimes becomes easier to pronounce for the Chinese speaker. Try **SiL-EEK**.)

blow — **BL-OH** (if difficult, try **BiL-OH**)

flow — FL-OH (Try FiL-OH)
floor — FL-AW-R (Try FiL-AW-R)
style — STIL (Try STI-iL)
simple — SiMPΣL
please — PL-EE-Z (Try PiL-EE-Z)
pronounce—PR-OH-N-OW-NS (Try PR-OH-N-AH-OO-NS)
printout— PRiNT-OW-T
probably—PR-O-BΣBL-EE
explain — E-KSPL-AY-N
volume— V-O-L-yOO-M
prominence —PR-O-MiN-ΣNS
prolific — PR-OH-LiFiK
eminence — EH-MiNΣNS
unsettled — UHN-S-EH-TLD
ounces — OW-NSΣZ
cluster — KL-UH-STΣR
insatiable — iN-SAY-SH-ΣBL
splash — SPLA-SH
fried rice — FRID RIS
those — TH-OH-Z
thin — th-iN
although — AW-L-TH-OH
thus — TH-UH-S
clinic — KLiNiK (Try K-UH-LiNiK)
wheelbarrow — WH-EE-LBAR-OH
embellish — EH-MB-EH-LΣ-SH
aluminum — UHL-yOO-MiNΣM
platinum — PLATiNΣM
newer — N-yOO-WΣR
fewer — F-yOO-WΣR
plastic — PLASTiK

boiling onions — **B-OY-L-EE-NG UH-N-YΣNS**
early — **uRL-EE**
reverse — **R-EE-YuRS**
fifteen — **FiFT-EE-N**
example — **EH-GZAMPΣL**
thousands — **th-OW-ZΣNDZ**

Now that we are aware of our trouble spots, let us begin to apply what we've learned. After a few practice sessions, you will learn to imitate the correct sounds of the following sentences, slowly, but correctly. Your next step toward success will come when you begin to self-monitor and self-correct your spontaneous speech in your daily interrelationships with other English speakers.

After a period of time — which varies with different students — you will arrive at your final goal: the automatic, self-correcting production of standard American-English, as you automatically (without seeming effort) monitor and self-correct your everyday speech.

Please read each of the following sentences aloud, one at a time, after listening carefully to the tape demonstration. Stop the tape after each sentence, and practice until you feel you have come close to correct pronunciation. Then record both my version and yours on your own tape recorder. You now have a record of your progress up to this point.

Later, repeat my recitations, this time without reading the text. When you have attained a fair degree of fidelity, memorize and recite some of the sentences to your family and friends. You will be pleasantly surprised at their response,

which should further reinforce your new habits of speech. Remember, we must be patient and allow time to pass. Eventually you will find your new habits spreading to formerly-unfamiliar words.

VOWEL PRACTICE

Repeat after me in the silent spaces. Record both versions and compare. This lesson should be practiced and practiced until you have considerably narrowed the difference between your recitation and mine.

AY (EH-EE)

That jewel is not jade — it's fake. It's only painted that color.

It's shameful to place the blame on Mame.

Kay weighed the paint before making the sale.

Headaches and backaches and earaches and toothaches can cause much pain.

The parade turned out to be an insane charade.

Dave and Mabel took a plane from Maine to the Ukraine.

The renegades on the barricade slaked their thirst with pails of orangeade and lemonade.

Waiter! Take away this pastry. You may change it for a plate of plain date cake.

AH

The Taj Mahal is not located in Guam or Iran (EE-R-AH-N)

There are few skylarks and woodlarks in Denmark.

If you begin your journey in Washington, D.C., you can hardly miss Panama on the way to Bogotá.

Kindhearted, chicken-hearted, broken-hearted Martin bartered a Bartlett pear for Charlie's dark barley.

A

The dancing master ran to Mack's stand for a ham sandwich.

The bad man sat on my black hat, so I grabbed his tan cap and ran.

The diplomat dispatched to Leningrad was an osteopath from Trinidad.

The next Olympiad featuring orangutan track events could take place in Yucatán, Pakistan, or Afghanistan.

Diana and Hannah exported their Havana bananas to Montana, Louisiana, Indiana, and Guiana.

AW

Morse, the lovelorn Norse, played a French horn on the North rim of the Matterhorn.

Four haughty horses and a naughty Macaw were born in a Montreal hallway during and awful thunderstorm.

Mortimer drank alcohol and water highballs at the free-for-all softball game.

Archibald crawled and called from the stone-walled vault.

EE

Apathy, empathy, sympathy, and dyspathy were each bittersweetly displayed by the evil King Lear.

Chinese, Japanese, Cantonese, Pekinese, and Burmese are as different from each other as Portuguese is from Singhalese.

Marguerite treated Peter to discreet meals of buckwheat,mincemeat, and sweetmeats.

EH

For breakfast she spread jelly and cheddar cheese on bread, fed Jerry, then went to bed again.

Ed met a terrible yellow leopard when he went to Anabelle's French hotel.

Blockheads and boneheads and deadheads and hotheads fell together when Spence spread his deadly message.

OO

Lewis missed his tutor at school because his tooth was loose.

Luther claimed that Boole was too poor to attend Santa Cruz College.

Rube Bloomberg concluded that Calhoun was too poor to own a bassoon.

There is no sight loonier than a balloonful of prune-fed baboons spooning under the moon.

UH

Uncle munched a bunch on onions as he scrunched under Gunther's umbrella.

The sun comes up like thunder once a month in Tundra country.

I hunger for those seductive Hungarian Sunday suppers that Mother once served.

Those who study voltage and currents understand the meanings of the terms "inductance", "conductance", and "reluctance".

I (AH-EE)

Clyde tried to fight his way through nine miles of senile reptiles on the Nile.

Simon denied that there will be pie in the sky when he dies.

OH (UH-OO)

Zola Cohen munched on a smoked Polish sausage and Gorgonzola while bowling in Pensacola.

Rhoda Dolan dozed while rowing her boat in the ferocious, precocious ocean.

Viola O'Neill broke her crayola while holding a bowl full of baloney and macaroni.

u (UH-EE)

The purple turban was purchased by a Persian merchant for thirty pearls.

Bert learned that he earned more in Lucerne than Gert did in Berne.

I have heard that all birth, from cutworms to pachyderms, returns to the earth.

OW (AH-OO)

In an hour, Howard, the loudmouthed scout with the gout, will return to the clubhouse.

Sam Howe clowned on the crowded Greyhound bus from Foochow to Moscow.

I was dumbfounded and astounded as I watched the proud scow run aground loaded with flounders.

Oi (AW-EE)

Roy parboiled, soft-boiled, and hard-boiled the eggs in a wok full of soy oil.

Boyle pointed out the Rolls Royce that Joyce foisted on the boy from Illinois.

Batboys, cowboys, and playboys are to be found among the hoi polloi of Troy and Des Moines.

Aee (A-EE)

Frank, the mountebank, handed Hank a blank check.

You may deposit your francs at the swanky savings bank on the riverbank.

The pranky crank was spanked by the lanky Yank on the shank of the clanky gangplank.

Let us review the sounds of American-English once again — first a few difficult vowels, then some troublesome consonants,

singly and combined — this time in more detail. Please repeat each recitation after me, in the silent spaces I have provided. Record both your version and mine. When you are through, compare the two. *Do not proceed with the course until you are satisfied with your performance.*

AY as in	jade paint lemonade
AH	wash barter start
A	bad black sandwich
AW	horn crawl stonewall
EE	feeling, leaving, believe
EH	leopard bread together
OO	school bassoon prune
UH	thunder Hungarian supper
I(AH-EE)	reptile Simon senile
OH (UH-OO)	smoke precocious doze
u (UH-EE)	purple learn birth
OW(AH-OO)	clubhouse proud flounder
OI(AW-EE)	parboil Illinois pointed
Aee (A-EE)	blank spank cranky

Now for the consonants:

FL	flutter Florida flood
BL	bland blood problem
PL	plaster pleasant explode
SL	sleek slander reslotted
L	let, mellow, milk
P	pull petal perfect
PR	practice pronounce precedent

CL	clean clinic nuclear
TR	train transfer attract
Fyoo	fewer futile fumigate
Lyoo	aluminum allude luminous
TH	those that this
th	earth thin throw
H	herringbone, hold, helpless
J	agile, Jackson, jump
Q	quote, quite, quickly
S	cigar, sunshine, steel
V	vodka, violet, vinegar
W	wagon, world, wisdom
CH	China child cheese
Tyoo	Tuesday substitute attune
SH	essential insatiable initial
BR	brilliant library February
NG	sing tongue Hong Kong
B	stab fib hub
D	broad bladder sound
K	exercise axiom acclaim
N	neat, near, name
R	frost teacher impress
T	fast assort blast
GZ	exert examine exactly
Z	zebra zoologist easy

VOWEL DIFFERENTIATION

The **EH** sound of American-English could be quite difficult for speakers from Chinese countries, who tend to pronounce it as **A**, and conversely, **A** is often mispronounced as **EH**. In

order to learn to sharply differentiate between the two, it is important that you repeat the following word pairs, and the sentences that follow, after me, carefully comparing your pronunciation with mine. I shall provide a silent space between each recitation so that you can repeat and compare.

bed	bad	kettle	cattle
Meg	mag	wreck	rack
Rhett	rat	pest	past
Edison	Addison	fester	faster
pen	pan	peck	pack
neck	knack	lest	last
Beth	bath	Becker	backer

Rhett was the pest who sat on Addison's neck.

The bad boy slept in Harry's bed.

Edison invented the gramaphone, not the telegraph.

Tell Jerry that Hal can't pack his medicine.

Max and Meg snacked on black bread and eggs.

Crafty Ben zigzagged to the edge of the craggy flat.

Queen Mab bagged a cab to French Quebec.

The sexy Czech kissed his aunt's neck in Afghanistan.

Abraham the rebel tracked Ed to a Halifax cul-de-sac.

Celeste and Cal spent the weekend in Trinidad and Leningrad.

The following vowel differentiation exercise will cure your tendency to confuse OO with oo.

look	Luke	wood	wooed
full	fool	could	cooed
pull	pool	bull	Boole

soot	suit	hood	who'd
should	shoe'd	cookie	kooky

Look Luke! Don't put your foot in the woman's boot.

The rueful fools drank their full of the good soup.

Let's pull the crooked poodle out of the nudist's pool.

Buddhists should shoe their pussy-footed hooves in the Yankee Doodle room.

Junior wooed six-foot Louise in the bramblewood bush.

The Chinook woman could coo like a furious pullet.

Luther claimed that Boole's law was full of bull.

Tootsie Bloomberg was the hood who'd concluded that his couscous was cooked.

Kooky kangaroo cookies crumble crudely.

The phrases to follow are clearly absurd and nonsensical. Repeat after me, line for line:

Be oblong, be bloated, be blasé.

Be tasteless, be rude, be multitudinous.

Live in a swamp and be three-dimensional.

Go into a coffeeroom closet and suck eggs.

Now let us practice differentiating between OH and AW. Repeat these sentences after me:

Moribund gophers ride baroque horses.

Morton, the phoney saxaphonist, poured water into his baritone horn.

Will the folks in the auditorium please focus their eyes on Horace?

* * * * * * *

If you have been carefully monitoring yourself up to this point in the course, your spontaneous speech, as well as your studied readings, should be showing a vast improvement. If not, I

would suggest that you stop at this point and review. Do not proceed until you sound almost letter-perfect to your ear, then continue to move forward by repeating the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address after me, piece-by-piece. I shall recite it through once, then piece-by-piece for you to repeat. After three or four recitations, please do your best to memorize the entire speech. It is not as difficult as it may appear.

The Gettysburg Address was delivered by Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863 at the dedication of the national cemetery on the Civil War battlefield of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great Civil War, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the

living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Now, I want you to listen to, and repeat, each segment of the speech after me. Note that I shall lay special stress on the possible problem areas as italicized in the text. Do not move on until you have thoroughly practiced each segment. Then recite the whole address from memory until you are satisfied. Record your final, polished version.

Segment 1: **Four score and seven years ago our *fathers* brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that *all* men are created equal. Now we are *engaged* in a great Civil War, testing whether *that* nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, *can* long endure. We are *met* on a great *battle*field of that war.**

Segment 2: **We have *come* to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and *proper* that we should do this. But, in a *larger* sense, we can**

not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not *hallow* — this ground.

Segment 3: The brave men, living and dead, who *struggled* here, have consecrated it, far *above* our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, *rather*, to be dedicated here to the *unfinished* work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

Segment 4: It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the *great task* remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the *last* full *measure* of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain

Segment 5: — that this nation, *under* God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the *people*, by the *people*, for the *people*, shall not perish from the earth.

* * * * * * *

English spelling, you must know by know, is one of the main reasons for your confusion in the production of American speech sounds. Why? Many years ago the Phoenicians devised a written alphabet that represented all of the sounds of their language. One symbol stood for one sound, and no other.

The Greeks modified the Phoenician alphabet to fit their own language. Then the Romans took

it over, but failed to modify the Greek alphabet to represent Roman speech. When the Roman alphabet reached England, there was still more confusion added, with the written alphabet representing the sounds of speech even less than it did under the Roman. Up to the time of the invention of printing, there was a large degree of variation permitted in the spelling, but the widespread use of print finally standardized the spelling of words.

By this time, written English bore little relationship to the sounds of the language. Let us examine a small portion of the illogic that we have inherited today. For example: The sound of **EE** in "believe", "receive", "Phoebe", "amoeba", "aegis", "key", and in the word "quay" (pronounced **K-EE**). Those words present a good example of a single sound, **EE**, represented by a variety of spellings.

Another example is offered in the spelling of words ending in the letters *o-u-g-h*, as in "dough", "enough", "through", "cough", each sounded differently. How about the **SH** in "sure", "ocean", "station", "Charlotte"? Or the letters that are never sounded, as the **B** in "thumb", the **P** in "pneumonia", the **G** in "phlegm", the **L** in "talk", the **K** in "knave", the **T** in "often", and all those **E**'s in words such as "love", "make", "store", etc.?

I could go on and on with the homonyms — words that are spelled differently but pronounced the same — for example: "bear" and "bare", and the words spelled the same but pronounced differently, as in "tear" (cry) and

"tear" (rip), and "read" (present) and "read" (past).

Notice, also, the way the sound of the letter ***a*** changes in the following words: "bare", "large", "woman", "bat", "rage", and "fall". Look at the strange variation of ***s*** which sometimes sounds like **S** and other times **Z** as in "easy" (**Z**), "pass" (**S**), "bags" (**Z**) "his" (**Z**), "us" (**S**). All of the illogic and inconsistencies of American English will become less confusing to you as you continue to speak and practice, and use the language in your daily business and social life.

We should, at this point, take one more look at the important sound of **UH**, the most often-heard sound in American English. Because it does not exist in the Chinese language, it is particularly difficult for you to hear and pronounce. To add to the confusion, it is the sound of most unstressed vowels and many combinations of vowels and consonants; in this course that unstressed sound is represented by the *schwa*, or **Σ**.

Here are some practice words containing that sound, contrasted with words that are often confused with it. Repeat each pair after me, in the silent space I have allowed. Compare your sound with mine, and keep practicing until perfect. Or as close to perfect as you can come.

cub	cob (AH)	mud	mod (O)	
bus	boss (AW)		tut	tot
(O)				
gun	gone (AH)		sub	sob
(AH)				
won	wan (AH)	cup	cop (O)	
	fun fawn (AW)			

The following is the **UH** sound as it appears in the initial, the medial, and the final position of a few words:

1st syllable	2nd syllable	3rd syllable
affair	able	medium
account	animal	develop
lunch	human	betrayal
supper	soften	Montana
again	ballad	example

* * * * * * *

The following combines a number of problem sounds for you. I will read the whole thing through. Then you must replay my recitation at least three times, each time repeating after me. I have italicized your possible pitfalls. Then memorize the short piece and recite it out loud to yourself and others, until you (and, of course, *they)* are satisfied with your recitation.

When I was (Z) *young* (UH), I p*i*ied (I) the old. Now *old* (OH), it is the *young* I pity (I).

In his eighty-eighth year, Dr. George Liu is (Z) even more energetic and vital than he was at 56, when he first began to enr*i*ch (I) my life.

He continues (Σ) to write and teach and *lecture.* Although he has long since passed the *mandatory* (A) retirement age for professors at the college of medicine at the university, he is still there, still *active.* Special dispensations have been made *for* him, new titles invented, loopholes *found.* The *fact* (A) is that he is indispensable — an institution *within* (I) an institution, without which it would be *dangerously* diminished.

So he tears about *town,* making daily visits to the *clinics,* as he has (A) *done* (UH) for *over* sixty years; and conducts (UH) his seminars, the most popular (O) in the history of the university.

He rises (Z) at dawn each *morning* and goes to *work* on whichever of his two books in progress (O) strikes his fancy. The first is a comprehensive (O) work on *Pavlov,* with whom he was *once* (UH) *associated.* The second, an autobiography. During the past four years, he has made three *round* trips to China, and is (Z) planning another. He *consults* regularly with the psychiatric division of the college (O) on a long-range project involving (O) the interrelationship between psychology and physiology. He serves as *mentor* and invaluable friend to a variety of individuals all *over* the United States.

He is (Z) a *perfect example* of his own theories on the subject (UH) of *age* (J) and *aging* (J), life and death.

I once asked for his views on death.

"Oh, I don't *mind* the idea at all," he replied. "I'm quite resigned (Z) to death, but — *but just not* (O) today!"

Now let's talk about *reciprocal assimilation*. Please don't let that term frighten you — it simply refers to the tendency of those who speak English to reduce unstressed vowels to a barely audible schwa, or Σ, sound. In the languages of China, you are taught to respect and enunciate each and every vowel; the reverse is true in English. As strange as it may sound, you will be better understood if you learn to overstress accented vowels of words and reduce the remaining vowels to a schwa.

Some good examples of that are offered by the words "attempt" (**ΣT-EH-MPT**) and "contain" (**KΣNT-AY-N**). If you carefully stressed each vowel in those words you would have said **A-TEMPT** and **K-O-NT-AY-N**, the pronunciation of which are correct, but decidedly not American-English. Reciprocal assimilation also affects consonants when they are influenced by neighboring sounds. All of this is natural, as your organs of speech tend to take the easiest route through a word, for the purpose of saving time and energy. Say **PiK-CH-UH-R** rather than the precise **PiKTY-OO-R**; **N-AY-CH-ΣR** instead of **N-AY-TY-OO-R**; **LiT-EH-RΣ-CH-EH-R** rather than **LiT-EH-R-UH-TY-OO-R**; **EH-J-OO-K-AY-T** instead of **EH-DY-OO-K-AY-T**.

I must also emphasize that English is spoken in phrases rather than in words. And reciprocal assimilation occurs in those phrases as well as in individual words. Examples: **DiDJ-UH G-OH?** for "Did you go?" **D-OH-NCH-UH N-OH I KΣN SWiM?** for "Don't you know I can

swim?" To get a feel of how Americans speak English, please repeat after me:

This is a picture of nature in the raw.

I love Russian literature.

Did you go to the store yesterday?

Don't you realize that education is important?

If I'm moving too fast for you in the recitation of the rules of good American English, please stop to absorb and practice each rule before moving on to the following two rules which govern the music of American-English sentences:

Rule 1: Most statements and commands in English end with a downward glide of the voice on the last *accented* syllable (not the last syllable, but the last *accented* syllable). This is known as Falling Intonation: Example: "The man is *crazy*." ***CRA*** is the last accented syllable. Note how the music of the sentence falls on the ***CRA*** .

Rule 2: Most statements indicating doubt or incompleteness — especially questions — end with an upward glide of the voice on the last *accented* syllable. This is known as Rising Intonation. Example: "Is she planning a *trip?*" ***TRIP*** is the last accented syllable. Note how the music of the sentence rises on ***TRIP***.

It appears that everything you have learned in this course regarding precise pronunciation must now be forgotten in order to master the casual sounds of standard American speech. To fully understand that point, recite the following short phrases by blending words together to form a single unit; in other words, recite each phrase as

if it were a single word. While doing that, stress the italicized syllable strongly, so that the remaining vowels in the phrase fade away to almost complete obscurity.

A *wonderful* life (**Σ *W-UH-ND*ΣF*Σ*LIF**)

Did you *locate* it? (**DiDY*Σ-L-OH-*K-AY-T-iT?**)

Think* of something.** (th-EE-NK-*ΣV S-UH-M-th-EE-NG**)

Cash* a check.** (KA-SH-*Σ-CH-EH-K**)

To kill a mockingbird. (**T-OO-KiL Σ *MOK-EE-NG*BuRD**)

Repeat each of the following quotations, taken from *"Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?"*, after me, in the blank spaces I have provided. Let's try for speed this time. Note where I have laid the stresses in each quotation. You may choose to stress the quotations differently. If so, please feel free to do so, and note that the intent and meaning may change with your interpretation.

All great truths begin as blasphemies.

Reflect on the works of anthropoligists, whose concern is the evolution and behavior of groups of people and cultures; their customs, mores, lifestyles, and religions. Expose your children to this subject in their early, formative years.

Inquire into the teachings of Charles Darwin. Immerse yourself in the study of your relationship to all other life forms on this planet. Learn how we originated, how we developed, how the selection

process works, and about the process of mutations.

There has never been a planned city in the history of our planet, but public interest in the field is increasing daily as the citizens of our decaying cities become more concerned with the future quality of their lives.

Total cities have to be designed in America, not by architects expressing their creativity on a building-by-building basis, but by city planners skilled in the design of man-machine systems.

A stroll through the city of tomorrow would take us through flora and parks where children will be seen playing. We would see cultural centers featuring large areas devoted to the arts and music, with people attending these attractions without payment or tickets of any kind. What would be startling to a person of today would be the sparse population and the strange silence over the city.

Since the planned cities of tomorrow will be radial, there will be radial conveyors to move people to and from the central core to the outer ring, and circular conveyors to transport them around each ring. As the radial conveyors carry a person outward, he would pass over crystal clear lakes and streams, and through forests of flowers and dark greenery.

The new technology would startle today's person. Giant production centers, operated by a social integrator, will silently form and shape all the products required for human needs. Voice-actuated devices of all sorts will act as electronic slaves for all citizens. The new leisure will allow

people to spend most of their time in education, travel, and adventure.

Symposiums on world affairs will be held at vast domed centers designed to house super-intelligent computers with three-dimensional displays. The control centers will be capable of making optimum decisions on billions of simultaneous events in fractions of a second.

Time has no respect for individuals or cultures. The bio-social forces that shape the future are lawful. The future, like the present, is the result of the primary forces of the space-time continuum.

It is happening. It is important that we be ready for it.

If you feel that your rate of speech is a little fast, here is an exercise that should slow you down. Read the following sentence at your normal rate, but insert the number one between each word:

She (one) is (one) going (one) to (one) the (one) movies (one) today.

Now repeat the exercise, but this time do not recite the number one out loud, but "think" it. It may feel a bit frustrating, but if you tenaciously practice a few random sentences like these for an hour a day, you definitely will modify your old behavior patterns. It takes patience and work, but you will succeed in becoming a slower, more deliberate, speaker, with the added bonus of more authority in your voice.

If your speech rate is too slow, time yourself while reading the following sentence. Then read it again against the clock. Don't worry about a

little bit of sloppiness. If at first you took fifty seconds to read, see if you can achieve it in thirty-five seconds. This exercise should raise your awareness of the differences in speech rate. Here is a good paragraph for increasing your rate:

To become a "perfect" person it is currently the fashion to get in touch with your feelings. Also, it is imperative that you scream, encounter, rolf, meditate, follow your stars, let it all hang out, lay back, and desensitize yourself. And on top of it all, you had better keep up with the endless flow of How To — books, with titles such as *How to Soothe Your Shattered Nerves, How To Be Free in an Uptight World, and How To Let Your Neurosis Work For You.*

You have surely noticed by now that our readings have become more than mere word exercises. They deal now with ideas — about science, technology, and the future. For the purpose of the course, whether you agree or not with the premise presented is not important. What is important to you is that you are learning to express ideas, forcibly and convincingly.

Here is a short discussion on the scientific method, also taken from *"Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?"*, which I want you to read into your tape recorder as if you were addressing a large audience. Then compare your recitation with mine. I have italicized those portions which I feel should be emphasized.

The scientific method is no secret, *wherever it is applied it will work.* The Soviet Union, China, and Japan are proving *just as capable* of using sci-

ence as we in the West. With the proper personnel and research facilities, whether the efforts are *Russian, American, African, Indonesian, or any other,* it will produce results. There is no magic formula to science and there are *no secrets being stolen* by the Russians and other "backward" peoples. We like to think that spies and traitors are stealing our secrets, but the knowledge of science is *international* and the techniques to produce super-bombs is *known by many nations* of the earth today.

Scientists and engineers in the Orient are attaining the high degree of social recognition and income that in America is given to actors, politicians, and business people. There is also in America an anti-intellectualism that generates *contempt* for scientists. Most scientists become captive to some private company so that they can be exploited to design products of obsolescence at the highest profit rate possible. If they are not captured by a private corporation, they are made subject to investigations, loyalty oaths, and questions regarding their lifestyle and philosophy. The laboratories of giant multicorporations are *well-equipped;* independent researchers could never possibly afford the funds and the facilities to do research as in the captive mode.

Respect for science by the younger generation is rapidly diminished by the distorted view of scientists presented in Hollywood movies, TV, and the science fiction literature which is *all fiction and little science.* In the movies scientists spend most of their time in labs rubbing their hands and staring with bulging eyeballs, surrounded by electronic gadgets, from high-voltage condensers

discharging static sparks to computer read-outs making "futuristic" noise.

Most lay people have only *a hazy notion* of what research scientists do. Scientists are often *social*, even *gregarious*, beings. The world of science is a place of *intelligence* and *ambition*, of people who want to do well at their work and be respected by their peers for it. In that respect, they are much like the rest of us. But the stakes in scientific research are *high*, and the rewards can be *greater*. And in a world of job dissatisfaction, they appear to enjoy their work, where they are usually engaged in the humdrum work of checking, measuring, and acquiring information related to the quantities and qualities of phenomena.

In chemistry, much of the work is rote in purifying materials, checking spectra, breaking down chemicals, synthesizing new ones, deducing molecular structures, and blending substances into mixtures with special properties. In astronomy, most of it involves sky-mapping with the use of optical and radio telescopes. Physics is a lot of tedious work, collecting data related to subatomic particles and nuclear structures. Geologists are constantly accumulating data related to the structure, composition, and fossil content of rocks, and age-dating and recording geological histories. They are also involved in the study of metals, minerals, and fossil fuel deposits. As dull as it may appear, *this is the stuff from* which most scientific achievement is born.

Even if you don't agree with the premise of that last recitation, I want you to sound as if you do. It may take twenty tries until you can deliver

it cleanly, with conviction and power. You must learn to become personally involved with *what* you say, as well as *how* you say it.

After you have achieved that, I would like to extend my congratulations on your brilliant achievement in hurdling all the obstacles I have set in your path up to now.

Yes, *"what* is said" may be more important than *"how* it is said" — that was the reason for assigning you the reading of the essay on the scientific method. But *what* is said always comes across more convincingly when it is skillfully communicated.

* * * * * *

Here are a few tongue-twisters, difficult even for the average American, so do not despair if you find them tough going at first. Stay with it until you get them right. I would suggest also that you memorize them — they can be very impressive to your friends and, as you shall see, quite difficult even for native Americans to execute without a slip. The trick is to concentrate on *what* you're saying, not on the mechanics of slick articulation.

She stood on the balcony inexplicably mimicking him hiccuping and amicably welcoming him in.

Are you copper-bottoming 'em, my man? No'm, I'm aluminiuming (AL-yOO-*MiN*-EE-ΣM-EE-NG) 'em, mum.

The sixth shiek's sixth sheep's sick.

Theophilus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust three

thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb. Now, if Theophilus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of *his* thumb, see that thou, in sifting a sieve full of unsifted thistles, thrust *not* three thousand thistles through the thick of *thy* thumb.

Please record those tongue-twisters on your own tape and compare them with mine.

* * * * * *

We have come to the end of the course. I want you to keep in mind that erasing your accent is a continuing process; you must assign at least an hour a day for practice. Now, as I bid you good-bye, I wish you the best of luck in your future undertakings.

Jack Catran

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Jack Catran is a scientist with many years of experience. As a consultant to leading aerospace corporations, he participated in the Apollo program and other major U. S. space shots, where he specialized in the design of life support and man-machine systems. He has conducted extensive research on the use of computer-generated graphics in intelligence communication systems, automated teaching devices, and programmed learning. Language, phonics, and the science of verbal behavior has always interested him deeply. This book is a labor of love.

Pygmalion Books — *an imprint of*
JADE PUBLICATIONS
Box 5567, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

ISBN 0-933769-21-3